- CHAPTER 14 -
YESTER HILL

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About the Author

Wyatt Trull is a bestselling author of over fifty D&D products. He got his start publishing Curse of Strahd supplements, such as *Escaping Death House* and *The Wedding at Ravenloft*. He has DM'ed Curse of Strahd thrice and, at the time of writing, is in the middle of his fourth run. Dogged by a love of all things Ravenloft and crippling debts, he decided to write his own guide to Curse of Strahd in the wake of his bestselling *Dungeon of Mad Mage Companion*.

Using This Supplement

The *Curse of Strahd Companion* (hereafter simply "the *Companion*") is devoted to making the most out of your campaign. It provides tested advice, variants, dialogue, flavor text, and new encounters to better enhance your experience running one of the greatest modules of D&D. True to its name, it is meant to be your constant tableside companion before and during a session.

Why a Companion?

Even five years after its publication, Curse of Strahd is still lauded as 5th Edition's greatest campaigns: it is firmly rooted in gothic horror and provides a tight narrative nestled in a sandbox-like environment. The campaign's chief flaw, the *Companion* holds, is its organization—its buried details and uncommunicated direction. A Dungeon Master that fails to carefully read the module from cover to cover can find themselves later trapped when an important and missed detail crops up. The *Companion* seeks to remedy this: it looks forward so you don't have to. It also exists to streamline your session through advice, dialogue, and the providing of statistics (for monsters, magic items, and hazards) you would otherwise have to dig through other manuals for.

Companion Structure

The *Companion* is formulaic. Each chapter corresponds with a Curse of Strahd chapter:

Chapter 1 acts as a campaign overview, concerned with its characters and narratives.
Chapter 2 concerns Barovia itself, with an interest in its weather, geography, random encounters, and locations.
Chapters 3-15 concern their matching chapters in Curse of Strahd (i.e., both Chapter 3 of the Companion and Curse of Strahd concern the Village of Barovia).
Appendices of the Companion provide the information for any a) magic items, b) creatures, and c) effects that appear in the campaign. For example, Appendix B of Chapter 3 provides statistics for all creatures found in the Village of Barovia.
Death House revises the campaign prologue and provides new aids to better run it.

Glossary

The *Companion* makes the most of several terms:

CoS refers to Curse of Strahd
CMP refers to the Companion
App. refers to an appendix of *CoS* or *CMP*
Destined Ally refers to the Strahd's enemy, the ally that is destined to stand with the party, as determined by the Fortunes of Ravenloft
Final Confrontation refers to the location in Castle Ravenloft where the adventurers are fated to fight Strahd to the death.

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Chapter 14: Yester Hill

Upon Yester Hill convene the wildlings that worship Strahd as a deity—for, after all, he is the Ancient, and he is the Land. As a storm rages on, the druids conduct a foul ritual to give life to a **tree blight** called Wintersplinter, who shall usher in a new age of destruction. Questions abound. By whose vampiric blood was the Gulthias Tree first watered? Who has led the tribe in turning their backs upon the Old Ways? For what purpose would the druids unleash such a monstrosity, if not for a mere hatred for civilization? The *Companion* attempts to answer such questions through its *The Bastard of Zarovich* storyline.

Chapter Overview

The *Companion* considers Yester Hill the immediate sequel to Chapter 12—in that the Dungeon Master must immediately move the story there. Pursuant to this goal, the *Companion* has the Martikovs captured by the Gulthias druids in the final act of its *Blood and Wine* storyline in Chapter 12. Thus, the adventurers are compelled to follow immediately.

Notably, Strahd is slated to appear in this chapter, for along the western edge of the woods stands a wall of fog within which memories of the past can be viewed. The Dark Powers use these images to torment Strahd and remind him of his homeland. Strahd's next visit, which is mere coincidence, prompts the druids to begin their ritual. The *Companion* removes any appearance by Strahd in this chapter, and for several reasons:

- The *Companion* advocates for fewer, but more impactful, appearances by Strahd. This chapter also functions perfectly fine without his appearance.
- If you ran *Evil's Bride* in Krezk before this, Strahd ought to be preoccupied with wedding preparations in Castle Ravenloft.
- The *Companion* has the Martikov family abducted from the winery and brought here to be sacrificed. Strahd might not be so keen on letting a noble vassal die so ignominiously. Further, if the Martikovs reveal their wereraven curse, the Keepers of the Feather are done for.

Chapter Progression

Though *The Bastard of Zarovich* storyline is organized into three phases, Chapter 14 is truly a one Act chapter, provided the adventurers complete it in one venture.

Quick Notes

- The druids perform a ritual to birth a **tree blight** known as Wintersplinter. The druids are led by **The Prophet**, who falsely believes himself to be the dhampir son of Strahd.
- The Martikov family has been kidnapped and used to power the druidic ritual. The adventurers must choose between fighting the ritualists to prevent Wintersplinter's birth, or saving the Martikovs and guaranteeing the tree blight is born. By when the adventurers reach Y3 or Y4, there are only 1d6 + 4 rounds until the ritual is complete. Only by splitting their forces, attacking the ritual site and the Gulthias Tree, can they achieve a true and utter victory.
- Strahd has been removed from the chapter.
- If the Tome of Strahd is found in this chapter, it is buried in the roots of the Gulthias Tree and is the source of its blood and evil.

Checklist

- Foreshadow the growing storm with foul weather that worsens the closer the adventurers come to Yester Hill.
- Have Muriel Vinshaw meet the adventurers at Area Y1 to debrief them on the ritual, and clearly communicate that the adventurers must choose between fighting the ritualists or saving the Martikovs.

Running the Chapter

This chapter is short and bloody. The adventurers must interrupt the druidic ritual. Throughout the chapter, mention the storm raging overhead, bringing attention to the sharp winds that circle Yester Hill and the lightning that often strikes the stones marking the bounds of Area Y3. Every flash of lightning illuminates the Gulthias Tree and the wicker statue of Strahd.

Time

If this chapter immediately follows the events of Chapter 12, it has been only 1d4 hours. If not, it would be appropriate for the ritual to be conducted at dusk or midnight.

Weather

The weather worsens into an all-out storm as the adventurers approach Yester Hill. The skies darken and the trails are turned to mud. Lightning arcs across the sky and thunder rumbles across Barovia.

Dramatis Personae

Character	Statistics	Role	Area	Description
Beucephalus	**Nightmare**	A	SE	Strahd's demonic steed, upon whose back he strides across the midnight air.
Davian Martikov	**Wereraven**	P	Y3	Patriarch of the Martikov family and grandmaster of the Keepers of the Feather.
Kavan	N/A	P	N/A	The restless spirit of a bloodthirsty chieftain of yore.
The Prophet	See App. B	A	Y3	The druidic leader who has convinced even himself that he is the dhampir son of Strahd.
Strahd von Zarovich	*CoS* App. D	A	SE	A tree blight born from the druid's ritual to wage war on civilization.
Wintersplinter	**Tree Blight**, *CoS* App. D	A	Y3	Strahd visits Yester Hill to gaze upon the Wall of Fog in the *Druid's Ritual* special event.

Dramatis Personae

This chapter features the following characters:

Davian Martikov

Davian is an old, done man that knows that Death waits for no one but the Devil Strahd. For decades now has he served Barovia, its people, and the Keepers of the Feather. As patriarch of the Martikovs, he assumed the title of Grandmaster after his mother passed away. He is a crotchety old man with little concern for what is polite or proper. He has considered himself to be a little too wild for high society. Davian is also one of the few in Barovia who dares speak Strahd's name aloud.

In this chapter, the wounded Davian arrives to free his family from the Gulthias Tree. He has been poisoned by crowpoison incense, bludgeoned and fed upon by blights, and suffers from the frailties of age.

Kavan

Kavan was a ruthless chieftain whose tribe lived in the Balinok Mountains centuries before the arrival of Strahd von Zarovich. Although he was very much alive, Kavan had some traits in common with vampires: he slept during the day and hunted at night, drank the blood of his prey, and lived underground. In battle, he wielded a spear stained with blood. His was the first *blood spear*, a weapon that drains life from those it kills and transfers that life to its wielder, imbuing that individual with the stamina to keep fighting.

Kavan's spirit has yet to find peace. The wildlings have turned away from honoring the ancestors to instead worship Strahd and poison the land. He seeks the strongest member of the party and challenges them to wield his legendary weapon to kill the Gulthias Tree.

Muriel Vinshaw

Muriel Vinshaw, the **wereraven** met in the Ruins of the Berez (and, per the Companion, in the Blue Water Inn of Vallaki) has come with Davian Martikov to help rescue his family. Like all other Keepers of the Feather, Muriel is loath to reveal her lycanthropic nature. Desperate times, however, warrant desperate measures.

Muriel is a short, wary woman of graying vitality but whose sharp, green eyes betray no signs of age or sloth. She is dressed in simple peasant's attire.

Roleplaying Muriel. Muriel is a realist and cynic. She is straight to the point, especially in this chapter when the Martikovs are endangered. She addresses the adventurers by name. A veteran voyeur and spy, Muriel has already scouted out Yester Hill from the air and understands that the Martikovs are being used as sacrifices to power the druidic ritual from afar. She believes the druids intend to animate the giant wicker man when, in truth, they are birthing Wintersplinter, a tree blight.

The Prophet

The Prophet is the leader of the Gulthias Cult, a poor fool raised by Baba Lysaga, who found him as a babe in the woods. He has been raised on a lie: that he is the illegitimate son of Strahd and Volenta Popofsky, born in her dead womb on the night of her vampiric turning. Baba Lysaga refused to name the Prophet and still now, fifty years later, the druid lacks an identity other than "the dhampir son of Strahd" and "the Future," as Baba Lysaga has raised him to believe. Whether Baba was prophetic or simply bored remains to be seen, but she has set in motion a chain of events to see to the ruin of Strahd's enemies: the Keepers of the Feather.

The Prophet does not dare believe he is anything but Strahd's bastard. He has staked his entire life on that lie. Like a vampire, the Prophet drinks the blood of men and sleeps in a grave, a dogma he has enforced upon the Gulthias Cult who now worship Strahd as a god. He needs Strahd to be a god so that he himself may have an identity. The Prophet proves to be a fanatic to these ludicrous beliefs; his world would crumble without that zealotry.

The Prophet leads the Gulthias druids in their ritual atop Yester Hill. Thanks to Baba Lysaga, he and his followers have an undying hatred for the Martikov family, whose own lineage (altered by the *Companion*) includes wildling druids. When Wintersplinter the tree blight is born, he intends to cleanse Barovia with ash and shadow.

Roleplaying the Prophet. The Prophet is fond of grandiose statements that pay homage to Strahd and himself:

- "You are too late! The ravens bleed! Long dead will our feud be and soon Barovians everywhere will know we are not the scum of the earth, but the salt!"
- "I shall do my father proud!"
- "The Son of Strahd bows to none!"
- "He is the Ancient… He is the Land… and I am the future."

- "It shall be a cruel winter!"
- When the Prophet is slain, he gawps and stammers, "But, but… Baba Lysaga… promised… the future."

Strahd von Zarovich

The Lord and Master of Barovia is slated to appear in the chapter, with his arrival cause for the druids to begin their foul ritual. The *Companion* outright removes Strahd from Yester Hill for the *The Bastard of Zarovich* storyline. His presence would only detract from the druids and offer too many possibilities for the *Companion* to account for. Further, with the Martikovs being present, it would threaten to reveal their existence as wereravens.

If you continue to include Strahd, he mocks the adventurers as they deal with the druids.

Variants & Revisions

The *Companion* makes several changes to this chapter:

- Ordinarily, the Gulthias Tree can only be killed by completely uprooting the stump, or by casting a *hallow* spell, which is firmly out of the adventurers' hands. In *The Bastard of Zarovich*, Kavan's spirit reveals that the *blood spear*—if earned—can be used to suck out the vampiric blood used originally to water the Gulthias Tree. Thus, the adventurers can destroy the tree after all, if they prove themselves to Kavan.
- Per the *Companion*, the Martikovs are in a decades-long feud with the Gulthias druids. Davian Martikov's grandmother was born to the druids years ago and left after many began to worship Strahd as a god. This alone adds a more personal motivation for the druids.
- The magic battleaxe buried in the Gulthias Tree has been reformatted as an actual magic item: the *Treantfeller*. See Appendix A.

Crowpoison

Just how the Gulthias druids can overpower lycanthropes—beings with immunity to nonmagical, nonsilvered attacks—is addressed in Curse of Strahd. Spellcraft, of course, can overcome a lycanthrope's natural defenses, but any attack made by a blight would fail to even scratch a wereraven. The Keepers of the Feather could, even if surprised, tear apart any unharmed. So long as they aren't struck down with magic, the wereravens ought to triumph over mere druids too.

The events of Chapter 14 require that the wereravens be rendered impotent—their shapeshifting stymied and their lycanthropic immunity to nonmagical, nonsilvered attacks muted. To this end, crowpoison has been planted all around Yester Hill. The wereravens have been bound by vines and draped with crowpoison garlands that burn the flesh and emit a pungent odor, rendering the wereravens conveniently powerless.

Crowpoison, as elaborated on in Chapter 12, is an herb lethal to wereravens, just as wolfsbane is to werewolves. See the sidebar for details.

Crowpoison: Ravenbane

Known as *nothoscordum bivalve* by herbalists and "false garlic" by peasants, crowpoison is a wild, scentless flower frequented by butterflies. It can be identified with a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Nature) check.

Consumption. A wereraven that consumes a sprig of crowpoison is poisoned for 1d6 hours, and must make a DC 13 Constitution saving throw, taking 41 (7d8 + 10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. The wereraven is also poisoned for 1d6 hours.

Incense. The druids of Yester Hill have found crowpoison and devised a noxious incense that sickens wereravens and deprives them of their ability to shapeshift. A wereraven that starts its turn within 60 feet of the incense, or enters within that range for the first time on its turn, must succeed on a DC 18 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 24 hours. While poisoned, the wereraven loses its immunity to nonmagical, nonsilvered attacks and can't use its Shapechanger feature to transform.

The Prophet

The Gulthias leader—known as the Prophet—is believed by the wildlings to be the dhampir son of Strahd, born from Volenta Popofsky's dead womb on the night of her vampiric turning and abandoned by Strahd in the woods. As the legend goes, the son was found and raised by wolves and wildlings. Because the Gulthias Tree itself was watered with the blood of a vampire—if it was not tainted by the evil of the *Tome of Strahd*, if your tarokka reading indicated Yester Hill as the site of that Fortune of Life—the myth has been cemented.

This all, of course, is nonsense. As will be revealed in Chapter 14, the Prophet is nothing more than a charlatan, a druid whose advanced power has slowed his aging, and a follower of Kavan's example (the blood-drinking chieftain of yore).

Strahd's Absence

Ordinarily, Strahd is due to arrive at Yester Hill—his arrival even signals to the misguided rituals that they ought to begin their ritual. The *Companion* removes this, so as not to distract from the chapter. Strahd's presence is far more trouble than it's worth. However, for the sake of hilarity, the Prophet spots a bat flying across the sky and claims that the Devil Strahd has come.

The Bastard of Zarovich

This storyline covers all of Yester Hill and assumes that the Martikovs were abducted during the *Blood and Wine* storyline covered in Chapter 12. It also requires the *Companion's* revisions to the Gulthias druids, in which the Gulthias' leader—hereafter known only as "the Prophet"—claims to be the dhampir son of Strahd. This storyline spans the entirety of Chapter 14 and has Kavan, the blood-drinking chieftain of yore described in *Dramatis Personae*, reach out to the adventurers. It also incorporates the *Strahd's Absence* variant; thus, Strahd is not meant to arrive here, as it opens up too many possibilities and allows the Martikovs to exercise their lycanthropic abilities without betraying their identities to Strahd.

The Choice. This storyline boils down to a choice: end the druids first and risk losing the Martikovs, or rescue the Martikovs and guarantee the birth of Wintersplinter. The adventurers can, of course, go for both simultaneously if they are willing to split the party, which is the only way to ensure a true victory, for if the Martikovs are saved, Wintersplinter is born weakened; if the ritualists are slain, Wintersplinter is not born, but the Gulthias Tree bleeds the Martikovs dry.

I. The Raven Caws

A storm rages above and the ritual has already commenced by when the adventurers reach Area Y1. Each flash of lightning silhouettes the druids, the wickerman from which Wintersplinter shall be born, and the Gulthias Tree. Read the following:

> Through the woods you go, the weather worsening as you approach the place known as Yester Hill. Lightning splits the skies and thunder rattles the world. With every flash, you can see the obscenities taking place there: figures wreathed in auroral light dance around a huge man-shaped object—likely made of wicker. On the far side of the hill stands a crooked tree whose evil you can feel from even this vast distance.
>
> As you watch this ritual from afar, it grows more frenzied, more intricate. Lighting strikes at shorter and shorter intervals… and that evil grows. You feel it on your skin like mist.

As the adventurers approach Yester Hill, they risk being sighted by sentries. A sharp, feminine voice calls: Muriel Vinshaw (a wereraven; see Dramatis Personae) calls out to them from the trees just before they enter a sentry's line of sight. She then warns them of the ritual: specifically that to save the Martikovs, the adventurers must either stop the ritual in Area Y3, or liberate the Martikovs from the roots of the Gulthias Tree in Y4 beforehand. Read the following:

> The woman is dressed in simple attire, but her eyes are keen and hardened. She points to the hill and tells you, "I've scouted the area from on high. A ritual is underway; the druids stand around a huge wicker man whose heart glows green with magic. They require blood for this ritual, I know that at least, but their victims are not at the ritual site. That devilish tree drinks from their veins at its roots, lending power to the ritualists from afar. And it is crawling with those blighted fiends.
>
> "It is a good two hundred paces between that wretched tree and the ritual site. We must either end that ritual first—risking the lives of its sacrifices—or gamble on a swift liberation. Perhaps a swift liberation will end the ritual… Perhaps it will guarantee its completion. I cannot truly say. Davian and I will, however, move in on the tree once you arrive and deal with its disgusting children."

Once the adventurers are finished speaking with Muriel, she openly shapeshifts into a raven and flies off to fetch the wounded Davian from nearby.

II. The Spirit of Kavan

So long as the wildlings worship Strahd, the spirits of the dead cannot find peace. Chief amongst these restless spirits is Kavan, the legendary chieftain of yore, who reaches out to the strongest of adventurers, preferably a barbarian, ranger, fighter, or druid. This event effectively eclipses the *Blood Spear of Kavan* special event described in Curse of Strahd.

As the adventurers begin to mount Yester Hill, Kavan's spirit reaches out. Read the following:

> You hear a whisper, a deep voice carried on the wind. "Long have I waited," it says, "For one who may bring honor back to our people." As lightning rends the sky, you see several ghostly spirits standing before the cairns of Yester Hill. They are gone with the flash, but still, that voice continues: "The druids have turned our people away from the gods and ancestors of yore. They worship the Nightfiend, the Vampire, for well is it known that he is the Ancient, he *is* the Land."
>
> Another flash of lightning—and before you stands a ghostly warrior draped in wolf furs and painted red. In his hands is an ethereal spear from whose tip drips ghostly blood. Again, gone in a flash, but his voice thunders, "Behold my spear, the Spear of Kavan, drinker of blood. Retrieve it from amidst my bones and use it to correct these blasphemies. Long have I waited for someone who is worthy. With this weapon, exsanguinate that godless tree. Draw the vampiric blood that sustains it and rule these mountains in my stead!"
>
> A vision is pressed upon your mind: a particular cairn upon the hill, overgrown with red-tinged moss. Your mind delves through the stone to behold a skeleton whose hand still grips the same bloodied spear.
>
> "Go forth, my warrior," thunders the spirit. "Return our people to the Old Ways!"

To the Cairn

Kavan's cairn is the southernmost cairn of Yester Hill; Kavan's chosen instinctively knows where to find it. The path, however, is fraught with danger. On the eve of Wintersplinter's birth, the wildlings are out in full force. If the adventurers follow the path around Yester Hill, they must contend with several patrols. The fierce winds snatch away any shouts the wildlings might make to alert their brethren.

Sentries. The wildlings have posted four **scouts** along Yester Hill to watch for danger. A scout sits upon a cairn on the higher ring. They are arranged in ordinal directions, with the northeast-stationed scout able to see Area Y1. The scouts are human and, without darkvision, have trouble seeing in the dark until lightning illuminates Yester Hill and the surrounding areas.

Thus, scouts have a passive Perception of 10 while it is dark and 15 whenever lightning flashes. Assume lightning flashes every 1d6 rounds. Scouts that spot enemies open fire and then go to alert the nearest scout or druids.

A character that succeeds on a DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation or Nature) check notices that there is some order to the lightning and can begin to measure the time between flashes, thereby allowing the adventurers to sneak by in semi-accurately measured darkness. Without a result of 18 or higher, however, two of the **eight** scouts see the adventurers.

Lupine Patrol. A **dire wolf** (with Intelligence 12, 15, and 11) patrols the upper ring. This is a shapeshifted **druid**, who assumes its true statistics after the dire wolf is reduced to 0 hit points.

Wisps. The druids' cruelty has attracted the patronage of two **wisps**, each of which meander through the hill's paths, one clockwise, the other clockwise. The wisps linger at the cairns of wildlings that died truly agonizing deaths, as if to drink in that pain. A wisp completes a circuit of the hill once every ten minutes and can be seen from afar as moving torches.

Kavan's Chosen

To prove their worth, Kavan's chosen must battle his animated remains: **Kavan's blood, Kavan's skeleton,** and **Kavan's spirit.** This battle, as Kavan declares, must be fought solely by his chosen champion; any outside interference by the party, including spellcraft, will disqualify the champion. This decision is intentionally unforgiving; interfering removes any possibility of acquiring the *blood spear*—and with it, any chance of easily killing the Gulthias Tree.

The Scale of Yester Hill

If the adventurers are spotted and identified as enemies, the wildlings send out a vanguard of two **berserkers**, one **druid**, and a **vine blight**. The map in Curse of Strahd has a scale of 50 feet per square. Thus, the Gulthias Tree is approximately 200 feet from Area Y3, which itself is a 250-diameter-circle.

When the adventurers reach the cairn, read the following to Kavan's chosen:

> That voice thunders once again, and in another flash of lightning, you see him standing before you: Kavan. His name is fresh on your tongue, your mind. He is as familiar to you as your own family, a long dead mentor that has watched you grow and strive and fail, and now on the eve of your graduation, stands ready to offer you one last rite of passage.
>
> "Behold the cairn of Kavan, whose every stone was dragged from the white and frigid peak of Mount Ghakis by mortal hands. Long have I waited for one who is worthy… One who is worthy to battle my blood, my bones, and my very spirit. There shall be no mercy. On this day, at this hour, under this storm-shattered sky, you and I shall battle. No dogs, no minions, no champions. Only you and I. Defeat me, and you shall rise greater than ever before. Die, and your bones will be left alone for the wind and rain."
>
> The stones begin to rumble, to boil and shiver away, revealing a moldy skeleton gripping a spear that weeps blood. Before them appears a ghostly warrior clad in animal furs, his fists wreathed in violet energy.
>
> "Carve your name into history, my champion!" thunders Kavan as his bones animate and the blood boils itself into a viscous monstrosity!

Unworthy. If Kavan's chosen is defeated, or if they allow any outside interference, Kavan's spirit telekinetically pulls the *blood spear* away and causes the stone to roll back over onto his grave. Creatures in his grave must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 11 (2d10) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone and pushed 5 feet away, out of the grave. The stone cannot be moved again for another ten years, except by a *wish* spell.

Worthy. If Kavan's chosen emerges victorious, Kavan's spirit kneels and presents the *blood spear*. Read the following:

> The bones at last fall silent, and the living blood evaporates. Kavan's spirit, bleeding a ghostly ichor, struggles to its feet. "You have proven… worthy."
>
> Agony strikes your hand, as if it were bereft of any and all blood, as if it ached for a familiar weight. As you cast your eyes upon the spear, you feel its devotion radiate outward like the love of a warm sun. Instinctively, you know it will obey you, a humble servant and faithful confidant in your war to come.
>
> Kavan's voice is but a whisper, as if every syllable was exhausting. "Wield this weapon in our name, if not your own. Use it to restore our people to honor. Shove it deep into the heart of that black tree and let the Blood Spear drink its fill."

Armed with the *blood spear*, the adventurers now have a chance to end the Gulthias Tree without uprooting it or casting a *hallow* spell.

III. The Root of All Evil

Quite conveniently, the ritual atop Yester Hill nears completion once the adventurers reach Area Y3. As described above, the adventurers must choose between going for the Martikovs and guaranteeing Wintersplinter's birth, or risking the Martikovs to end the ritual prematurely.

By when this act begins, there are 1d6 + 4 rounds until the ritual is complete, after which Wintersplinter is born and any victims still attached to the Gulthias Tree die. Area Y3, the Druid Circle is 250-feet-in-diameter, and the distance between the circle and the tree is 200 feet. For once, you must have your players count vast distances, as every round is precious.

Failure. If the party slays the ritualists, they prevent Wintersplinter's birth. In spite, the Gulthias Tree bleeds the remaining Martikovs dry. If the party instead focus on saving the Martikovs, Wintersplinter is born, albeit in a weakened state: it has 5 fewer hit points for each of the eight would-be sacrifices that is freed.

The Ritual

Atop this wretched hill, druids dance under the stormy sky, their hands aglow, their tongues twisted with foul syllables, their powers bent towards a towering effigy of wicker. The five druids stand in a pentagram, devoted to a ritual whose evil you can feel upon your skin and behind your eyelids. With every lance of lightning, the effigy seems to grow… realer, more solid, its authority grander, as if a spirit were being crammed inside it.

A shadowy figure lands before you—a massive bat that quickly turns itself into another druid, a white-bearded codger crowned in bloodied antlers. "You face the Son of Strahd!" he snarls! "By rights, your blood is mine!"

Ritualists. The ritualists are composed of five **druids** arranged in a pentagram around the wooden statue at whose feet stands **the Prophet**. The ritualists must use their actions to channel the ritual, but only one must survive to complete the ritual, even if it is the Prophet. Consider the following:

- The druids are fifty feet from one another.
- The druids each have 27 hit points; you can simplify this by weaving a spell into the mix: the druids all share damage equally and, for the sake of simplicity, have 100 hit points in total. Thus, if these hit points are reduced to 0, all druids die simultaneously. To communicate this magic to the players, the druids are all linked together by a black-and-green web of light that flares up whenever one druid is hurt.
- The druids, for the sake of simplicity, all have *barkskin* cast upon themselves and do not influence the battle until the ritual is complete; their entire turns are spent channeling the ritual. The Prophet alone can spend his turns not contributing to the ritual.

Wildling Vanguard

If the adventurers are spotted and identified as enemies, the wildlings send out a vanguard of two **berserkers**, one **druid**, and a **vine blight**.

- The ritualist guardians to act on initiative count 10 (losing ties) and the ritualist druids (whose turns are effectively skipped while channeling the ritual) to act on initiative count 1. Roll initiative for the Prophet and Wintersplinter as normal.
- After the ritual is complete, the surviving druids join the fray; assume they each have only 1 hit point remaining. The Prophet retains his hit points.

Guardians. The ritualists are protected by a **berserker**, a **druid**, and two **vine blights**, that rush out to meet the adventurers before they enter within 100 feet of the nearest druid. The druid opens up first with an entangle spell. These forces replace the six **berserkers** and six **druids** ordinarily here.

Wintersplinter. After 1d6 + 4 rounds, Wintersplinter bursts from the effigy and attacks, provided the ritualists are not slain prematurely. Wintersplinter has 5 fewer hit points for each victim saved from the Gulthias Tree's root in Area Y4 (leaving it with a minimum of 52 hit points, if all are freed).

The Gulthias Tree

In the darkness, you sense a brooding malice. The air becomes greasy, foul. Cockleburs, floated on by a sharp wind, stick to your clothes and bite at your flesh like ravenous ticks. The evil swells. It sighs, it moans wetly. You feel that evil beneath your feet, coursing like hateful blood through the arteries of some self-loathing titan whose disdain for itself is dwarfed only by its disgust for all other life.

Lightning flashes, revealing a crooked, bleeding tree with a battleaxe buried in its trunk. Foul creatures born of bark and vine crawl along its trunk like lice. Among the roots, pale human faces shine out—the Martikovs, reduced to cattle to be fed upon by bloodthirsty vines. "Help us!" they cry, "save us!" but is it too late? An infant cries out. *Is it too late?*

The lightning fades away, spent, and when all returns to darkness, you can't help but feel relieved you no longer must stare upon such naked evil.

Revision. The number of blights has been reduced for this encounter, as enumerated below. Additionally, two corrupted **dryads** have been added to this location. These "blight-sisters" (as the druids call them) are fey spirits trapped in Barovia by the Dark Powers, and corrupted by and bound to the Gulthias Tree.

- The number of **needle blights** has been reduced from six to three.
- The number of **twig blights** has been reduced to six.
- The number of **vine blights** has been reduced from three to one.

Martikov Wounds

Character	HP	Exhaustion	Wound Description
Adrian	10	1	Adrian is relatively unscathed.
Claudiu	4	3	Claudiu is concussed.
Dag	7	3	Dag suffered a vicious slash that ran from his neck to his ear. The right half of his face has been wrapped with a bandage that needs imminent changing.
Davian	7	2	Davian is wheezing and nearly feeble. A massive needle has punctured his lung. Only his lycanthropic regeneration has kept it from killing him. The most powerful lycanthrope, Davian's regeneration is slowly triumphing over the poison, but is inhibited also by the frailty of his advanced age.
Elvir	6	4	Elvir has a broken arm, which has been bound in a rough sling made from his torn shirtsleeve.
Martin	1	5	Martin is unconscious, his young lungs damaged from the crowpoison.
Stefania	1	2	Stefania took several needles to her left shoulder. The largest ones have been removed, but numerous infected splinters remain. She winces whenever she must move her left arm.
Viggo	1	3	Viggo is catatonic.
Yolanda	1	5	Yolanda is cold, hungry, and upset, and continues to cry despite her mother's wishes.

The Ravens Return. On the first round of combat, the **wereravens** Davian Martikov and Muriel Vinshaw descend from the sky to free the Martikovs. Davian, still weakened from the events of Chapter 12, can hardly fly in his raven form. Muriel, unhampered, remains in her hybrid form. Davian has 15 hit points and is suffering from one level of exhaustion, and thereby suffers disadvantage on ability checks (such as those made to free his family).

Sacrifices. The Gulthias Tree in Area Y4 powers the druids' ritual from afar. The Martikov family is entangled in its boughs, their blood being fed upon by invasive roots. At the end of every round, a random member of the Martikovs dies, exsanguinated by the tree. These sacrifices can be freed from the boughs, sparing the victim a terrible death; however, the Gulthias Tree doubles down as more victims are freed, making it harder to save all the Martikovs. As an action, a creature can attempt a Strength (Athletics) check (DC 15 + (1 per each sacrifice already freed) to free a creature. Davian Martikov and Muriel Vinshaw also use their actions to free victims. The *Martikov Wounds* table shows the state of each family member.

Lair Actions. The Gulthias Tree itself is alive with a malevolent sentience. At initiative count 20 and 10 (losing ties), the tree can choose one of the following lair actions:

- The Gulthias Tree explodes a **twig blight** within 300 feet, releasing a storm of woody shrapnel and writhing shadows. Creatures within 5 feet of the explosion must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 1d6 piercing damage and 2d6 necrotic damage on a failure, or half as much on a successful saving throw.
- The Gulthias Tree reaches out with a vine or root, targeting a creature within 60 feet, who must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or be pulled 20 feet along the ground in a direction of the Gulthias Tree's choice.
- The Gulthias Tree rakes its branches against a target, making a melee attack, (+6 to hit, reach 15 ft. 1d10 bludgeoning damage on a hit, and the target is either knocked prone or knocked by 10 feet).
- The Gulthias Tree targets one creature within 60 feet of it that is on the ground; the target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or become restrained until the start of the next round. A DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check made as an action ends the effect.
- The Gulthias Tree exudes poisonous pollen. Non-plants within 60 feet that can smell the pollen must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for the next minute. A creature can repeat their saving throw at the end of its turns, ending this effect on a success.

Areas of Yester Hill

Much of the *Companion's* advice for this chapter is presented in *The Bastard of Zarovich* above, such as **scouts** being positioned along Yester Hill and advice on how to run a combat with the Gulthias Tree.

Y1. Trail

The adventurers risk being spotted by a **scout** when they approach Yester Hill. The scout is positioned along the northeast rim of the upper path that rings Yester Hill. Assume he is 200 feet away when the adventurers first spot him; if the adventurers manage to hit him with a ranged attack, he dies instantly.

Y2. Berserker Cairns

With every flash of lightning, the spirits of the restless dead—the heroes of yore whose bones lie buried beneath the cairns of Yester Hill—can be seen, their disapproval for the Gulthias cult clear. Read the following text, which assumes the druids are already performing their ritual:

> The stone cairns tower above and lie below you, each mound no doubt dedicated to a hero of yore whose bones lie buried. You can't help but shake the feeling that you're… growing colder. Just as one bakes under the Sun's attention, so too, do you feel a chill grow inside your guts. Another flash of lightning paints Yester Hill in blue—and in that instant, you catch sight of another figure floating above a cairn. There and gone, there and gone in a flash. Another apparition, another glimpse of the restless dead.
>
> You can feel their disapproval and disgust on your skin. This entire hill is steeped in that jagged disdain, and instinctively, you understand that it is not towards you, but the wildlings atop the hill, who dance beneath the howling wind, their ritual underway.

Y3. Druids' Circle

Per *The Bastard of Zarovich*, the six **berserkers** and six **druids** hiding in graves here have been replaced with a single **berserker**, a single **druid**, and two **vine blights**, who instead guard the ritualists and **the Prophet**. If you do not run this storyline, restore the areas' original inhabitants.

The Scale of Yester Hill

If the adventurers are spotted and identified as enemies, the wildlings send out a vanguard of two **berserkers**, one **druid**, and a **vine blight**. The map in Curse of Strahd has a scale of 50 feet per square. Thus, the Gulthias Tree is approximately 200 feet from Area Y3, which itself is a 250-diameter-circle.

Y4. Gulthias Tree

Fortunes of Ravenloft

If your tarokka reading indicated that an artifact is found here, the artifact should be none other than the Tome of Strahd, in which case this is the source of the Gulthias Tree's evil. The ink in the diary is red—written in the blood of Strahd's victims—and has bled off the page, nourishing the Gulthias Tree.

Y5. Wall of Fog

The Wall of Fog is an opportunity to remind your adventurers of their homeworld. Moments after the adventurers see Strahd's ancestral home in the mists, the image shifts. Each adventurer then sees their own homeland, family, friends, or wants. Through the Wall of Fog, the Dark Powers torture these heroes by showing them what their hearts yearn for most.

You can either tailor these images for each adventurer, if you know their backstory well enough, or simply ask your players, "In the fog, you catch a glimpse of your homeland, as if the Wall of Fog were taunting you. What in that white miasma do you see?"

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Appendix A: Magic Items

The following magic items are featured in this chapter:

Magic Items by Location

Magic Items	Location
Blood Spear	Y2
Treantfeller	Y4

Blood Spear

Weapon (spear), uncommon (requires attunement)
When you hit with a melee attack using this magic spear and reduce the target to 0 hit points, you gain 2d6 temporary hit points.

Any creature can wield the spear, but only the character chosen by Kavan to wield it gains a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic weapon.

Treantfeller

Weapon (battleaxe), uncommon
This axe's handle is carved with leaves and vines, and the weapon weighs half as much as a normal battleaxe. When the axe hits a plant, whether an ordinary plant or a plant creature, the target takes an extra 1d8 slashing damage.

When a creature of non-good alignment wields the axe, it sprouts thorns whenever its wielder makes an attack with it. These thorns prick the wielder for 1 piercing damage after the attack is made, and this damage is considered magical.

Appendix B: Bestiary

The following creatures are featured in this chapter:

Missing Statistics. Per DM's Guild policies, Curse of Strahd-exclusive statistics are not included in this document. See the following pages in the module:

- Strahd von Zarovich: *Curse of Strahd* pg. 240

Berserker

Medium humanoid (any race),
Armor Class 13 (hide armor)
Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 10
Languages any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Actions

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) slashing damage.

Dire Wolf

Large beast, unaligned
Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 37 (5d10 + 10)
Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	3 (-4)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4
Senses passive Perception X13
Languages —
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Keen Hearing and Smell. The wolf has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or smell.
Pack Tactics. The wolf has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the wolf's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Druid

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment
Armor Class X11 (16 with *barkskin*)
Hit Points 27 (5d8 + 5)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills Medicine +4, Nature +3, Perception +4
Senses passive Perception 14
Languages Druidic plus any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Spellcasting. The druid is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following druid spells prepared:
Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, produce flame, shillelagh*
1st level (4 slots): *entangle, longstrider, speak with animals, thunderwave*
2nd level (3 slots): *animal messenger, barkskin*

Actions

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit (+4 to hit with *shillelagh*), reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage, 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage if wielded with two hands, or 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage with *shillelagh*.

Dryad

Medium fey, neutral
Armor Class 11 (16 with *barkskin*)
Hit Points 22 (5d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +5
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14
Languages Elvish, Sylvan
Challenge 1 (200 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Innate Spellcasting. The dryad's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14). The dryad can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *druidcraft*
3/day each: *entangle, goodberry*
1/day each: *barkskin, pass without trace, shillelagh*
Magic Resistance. The dryad has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.
Speak with Beasts and Plants. The dryad can communicate with beasts and plants as if they shared a language.
Tree Stride. Once on her turn, the dryad can use 10 feet of her movement to step magically into one living tree within her reach and emerge from a second living tree within 60 feet of the first tree, appearing in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the second tree. Both trees must be large or bigger.

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit (+6 to hit with *shillelagh*), reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage with *shillelagh*.
Fey Charm. The dryad targets one humanoid or beast that she can see within 30 feet of her. If the target can see the dryad, it must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or be magically charmed. The charmed creature regards the dryad as a trusted friend to be heeded and protected. Although the target isn't under the dryad's control, it takes the dryad's requests or actions in the most favorable way it can.
Each time the dryad or its allies do anything harmful to the target, it can repeat the saving throw, ending the effect on itself on a success. Otherwise, the effect lasts 24 hours or until the dryad dies, is on a different plane of existence from the target, or ends the effect as a bonus action. If a target's saving throw is successful, the target is immune to the dryad's Fey Charm for the next 24 hours.
The dryad can have no more than one humanoid and up to three beasts charmed at a time.

Kavan's Blood

Small ooze, lawful evil
Armor Class 8
Hit Points 26 (4d6 + 12)
Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)	5 (-3)	6 (-2)	2 (-4)

Saving Throws Dex +1
Damage Resistances slashing from nonmagical attacks except by Kavan's chosen
Damage Immunities acid
Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius(, passive Perception 8
Languages —
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Amorphous. Kavan's blood can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.
Bloodthirsty. Kavan's blood has advantage on melee attack rolls against any creature that doesn't have all its hit points.
Spider Climb. Kavan's blood can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 (1d6 + 1) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) necrotic damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 11). Until this grapple ends, the target takes 3 (1d6) necrotic damage at the start of each of its turns.

Kavan's Skeleton

Medium undead, lawful evil
Armor Class 16 (breastplate)
Hit Points 13 (2d8 + 4)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	6 (-2)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws Str +4, Con +4
Skills Athletics +4
Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning
Damage Resistances poison
Condition Immunities exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9
Languages understands all languages it spoke in life but can't speak
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Fragrance of the Grave. Any creature other than Kavan's spirit or Kavan's blood that starts its turn within 5 feet of Kavan's skeleton must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of the creature's next turn. On a successful saving throw, the creature is immune to the stench of Kavan's skeleton for 1 hour.
Reknit (3/Day). If Kavan's skeleton is slain but is within 20 feet of Kavan's spirit, it rises again at the start of its next turn with 1 hit point.

Actions

Multiattack. Kavan's skeleton makes two attacks.
Blood Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage, or 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack. If this damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, Kavan's skeleton gains 7 (2d6) temporary hit points.

Kavan's Spirit

Medium undead, lawful evil
Armor Class 11
Hit Points 36 (8d8)
Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)

Saving Throws Wis +3, Cha +5
Damage Resistances acid, fire, lightning, thunder; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks except by Kavan's chosen
Damage Immunities necrotic, poison
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 11
Languages Common, Druidic
Challenge 4 (1,100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Ethereal Sight. Kavan's spirit can see 60 feet into the Ethereal Plane when it is on the Material Plane, and vice versa.
Incorporeal Movement. Kavan's spirit can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. It takes 5 (1d10) force damage if it ends its turn inside an object.

Actions

Withering Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) necrotic damage.
Cairn Stones (Recharge 5-6). Kavan's spirit telekinetically hurls 1d4 + 1 stones from his cairn, each hitting a creature of his choice within 60 feet that he can see. A stone deals 1d4 + 1 bludgeoning damage to its target. The stones all strike simultaneously, and he can direct them to hit one creature or several.

Needle Blight

Medium plant, neutral evil
Armor Class 12
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	4 (-3)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 9
Languages understands Common but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 + 1) piercing damage.
Needles. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Nightmare

Large fiend, neutral evil
Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 68 (8d10 + 24)
Speed 60 ft., fly 90 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Damage Immunities fire
Senses passive Perception 11
Languages understands Abyssal, Common, and Infernal but can't speak
Challenge 3 (700 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Confer Fire Resistance. The nightmare can grant resistance to fire damage to anyone riding it.
Illumination. The nightmare sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

Actions

Hooves. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.
Ethereal Stride. The nightmare and up to three willing creatures within 5 feet of it magically enter the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa.

The Prophet

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil
Armor Class 12 (16 with *barkskin*)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +7
Skills Acrobatics +5, Arcana +5, Insight +7, Nature +5, Perception +7
Senses XX, passive Perception 17
Languages Common, Druidic
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +3

Quickened Spell (1/Day). When the Prophet casts a spell with a casting time of 1 action, he can instead change the casting time to 1 bonus action.
Rooted to the Earth. While standing on the ground, the Prophet has advantage on ability checks and saving throws made against being knocked prone.
Spellcasting. The Prophet is a 7th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following spells prepared:
At will: *shillelagh, produce flame, thorn whip*
3/day each: *barkskin, gust of wind*
2/day each: *call lightning, mass cure wounds, shield, wind wall*
1/day each: *blight, mass healing word*

Actions

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Bonus Actions

Shadow Crash (2/Day). The Prophet shapeshifts into a massive bat of shadowy energy. The Prophet flies to an unoccupied space on the ground within 60 feet of him that he can see. Creatures within 10 feet of this space must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) necrotic damage on a failed saving throw, or half as much on a success. A creature that fails this saving throw is also frightened until the start of the Prophet's next turn.

Tree Blight

Huge plant, neutral evil
Armor Class 15 (natural armor)
Hit Points 92 (8d12 + 40)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
23 (+6)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages understands Common and Druidic but can't speak
Challenge 7 (2,900 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +3

False Appearance. While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a dead tree.
Siege Monster. The blight deals double damage to objects and structures.

Actions

Multiattack. The blight makes one Branch attack and one Grasping Root attack.
Branch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 16 (3d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage.
Grasping Root. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 15 ft., one creature not grappled by the blight. *Hit:* The target is grappled (escape DC 15). Until the grapple ends, the target takes 9 (1d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage at the start of each of its turns. The root has AC 15 and can be severed by dealing 6 slashing damage or more to it at once. Cutting the root doesn't hurt the blight, but ends the grapple.

Bonus Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature grappled by the blight. *Hit:* 19 (3d8 + 6) piercing damage.

Twig Blight

Small plant, neutral evil
Armor Class 13 (natural armor)
Hit Points 4 (1d6 + 1)
Speed 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)	8 (-1)	3 (-4)

Skills +3
Damage Vulnerabilities fire
Condition Immunities blinded, deafened
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 9
Languages understands Common but can't speak
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

False Appearance. While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a dead shrub.

Actions

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

Vine Blight

Medium plant, lawful evil
Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 26 (4d8 + 4)
Speed 10 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Skills Stealth +1
Condition Immunities blinded, deafened
Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10
Languages Common
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

False Appearance. While the blight remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from a tangle of vines.

Actions

Constrict. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, and a Large or smaller target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the blight can't constrict another target.
Entangling Plants (Recharge 5–6). Grasping roots and vines sprout in a 15-foot radius centered on the blight, withering away after 1 minute. For the duration, that area is difficult terrain for nonplant creatures. In addition, each creature of the blight's choice in that area when the plants appear must succeed on a DC 12 Strength saving throw or become restrained. A creature can use its action to make a DC 12 Strength check, freeing it self or another entangled creature within reach on a success.

Wereraven

Medium humanoid (any race, shapechanger), lawful good
Armor Class 12
Hit Points 31 (7d8)
Speed 30 ft. (fly 50 ft. in raven and hybrid forms)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)

Skills Insight +4, Perception +6
Damage Immunities bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with silvered weapons
Senses passive Perception X16
Languages Common (can't speak in raven form)
Challenge 2 (450 XP) **Proficiency Bonus:** +2

Shapechanger. The wereraven can use its action to polymorph into a raven-humanoid hybrid or into a raven, or back into its human form. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its human form if it dies.
Mimicry. The wereraven can mimic simple sounds it has heard, such as a person whispering, a baby crying, or an animal chittering. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check.

Actions

Multiattack (Human or Hybrid Form Only). The wereraven makes two weapon attacks, one of which can be with its hand crossbow.
Beak (Raven or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage in raven form, or 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage in hybrid form. If the target is humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wereraven lycanthropy.
Shortsword (Human or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.
Hand Crossbow (Human or Hybrid Form Only). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.